

agricultural use.

WHEREAS, The increasing urbanization of our society has caused a shrinking of the land available for agricultural use; and

WHEREAS, This unfortunate situation is compounded by the unfortunate and ill-advised policy of the Internal Revenue Service that requires valuation of farmland and woodlands at market value for estate tax purposes; and

WHEREAS, Therefore land which may be assessed at \$500 an acre when used for agriculture can increase to a market value of \$2,000 [[to \$3,000]] or more an acre if assessed on the basis of non-farm use; and

WHEREAS, This means that heirs to farmland may be forced to sell off acreage, even though they may wish to farm it, because of the high estate tax that must be paid at the time it is received as an inheritance; and

WHEREAS, Once agricultural land is sold off to land speculators it is economically unfeasible to put it back into farming; and

WHEREAS, Out of town speculators have little concern for local welfare while they sit on the land waiting to make their profits. They constitute a threat of future intensive development of the land when the speculator can get his price; and

WHEREAS, In excess of 35,000 acres of land is removed from agricultural use each year in Maryland alone; and

WHEREAS, The elimination of hundreds of thousands of acres of farmland each year in the United States is a serious national problem which has detrimental local effects; and

WHEREAS, Senator Charles McC. Mathias and Representative Goodloe Byron have both introduced legislation in the Congress to accomplish a change in the taxing of agricultural lands; and

WHEREAS, The House Ways and Means Committee of the Congress will soon begin a complete review of estate tax laws; and

WHEREAS, The policy of taxing farmland at its value in non-farm use for inheritance tax purposes is one of the shortsighted steps taken in the name of progress which is ruining the ecology and the economy of this country; and